

STATINTL

The Flag-Wavers Forget the Past

By Marquis Childs

NO MATTER how many ways individual members of the committee may divide in their conclusions, the sober, restrained inquiry conducted by Sen. J. William Fulbright into the shooting down of the U-2 and its consequences has been a service to the Nation.

A great many questions remain unanswered. Despite persistent questioning Administration officials did not supply even an off-the-record basis the reason for scheduling



Childs

an espionage flight on May 1, a day of nation-wide celebration in the Soviet Union—two weeks before the summit conference was to open in Paris.

But reading between the lines committee members deduced that those directing the flights had become so confident after four years of operation that they believed they could detect in advance any spectacular rocket or missile shots the Soviets planned to send up on the eve of the summit. The photographs of Russian installations they were shown convinced the committee of the remarkable achievement of this high-altitude photography. While no one is likely to say so in public, overconfidence, together with lack of any effective high-level direction and coordination, seems to have been a principal reason for the tragic mishap.

There were bound to be questions which could not be answered in public and much of the transcript was necessarily censored. Some of the blank pages resulted not from highly secret evidence but as a consequence of heated exchanges between certain committee members. It was considered in the public interest to strike this out.

A LOUD and continuous complainer was Sen. Frank J. Lausche (D-Ohio). He seemed to feel there was something immoral about any inquiry, and on the day that Hugh L. Dryden of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration testified Lausche went to extraordinary lengths of denunciation.

"I want to congratulate the Senator from Ohio on his Fourth of July oration," Sen. Albert Gore (D-Tenn.) said after one especially fiery outburst.

"What do you mean by that?" Lausche demanded. "I was not delivering a Fourth of July oration."

"Why, I thought it was such a fine Fourth of July address that I almost stood up and cheered," Gore remarked.

This suggests one of the remarkable aspects of the current controversy—that it is unpatriotic to inquire into or criticize any aspect of the fate of the U-2 and its far-reaching political consequences. To do so, the argument runs, is to give aid and comfort to the communist enemy at a time when unity must be the first order.

Memories are short. In some instances the talk of patriotism first, last, and always comes from those who throughout the Korean War kept up a drumbeat of attack on President Truman. They attacked him for getting into the war at all, for the way in which it was conducted and finally for not concluding it as these critics thought it should be concluded. This war in the midst of a cold war but in a shooting war with Americans in numbers being killed and wounded every day.

THE REPUBLICANS in 1953 made most of their campaign on the Korean War and the "Democratic Ident" who by his blunders had got into it. In one informal back-stage speech after another candidate Eisenhower said that Asians should fight their own wars and American farm boys should be back home on the farm. The climax came with General Eisenhower's pledge to go to Korea and the resolution was being an end to the war.

The Eisenhower Administration ended the Korean War under circumstances that had previously reflected. Full by ceding half the country to Communist control, leaving in the overcrowded southern half such a congested population with so few natural resources that it is doubtful whether the Republic of Korea can ever become a viable nation or, for that matter, can survive without continuing massive aid from the United States.

The Republicans are at the moment supremely confident that President Eisenhower will elect the candidate, Richard Nixon, President. They are even bit smug about it.

Things may turn out this way in November. But it will be a sad commentary on the democratic process and the choice of a free people if that choice is based on the threats and promises of the dictator of a totalitarian state with Americans too dumb to be silent because of the attack.